

## Exploring the world with Christopher Meloni

by Kerri Rebresh

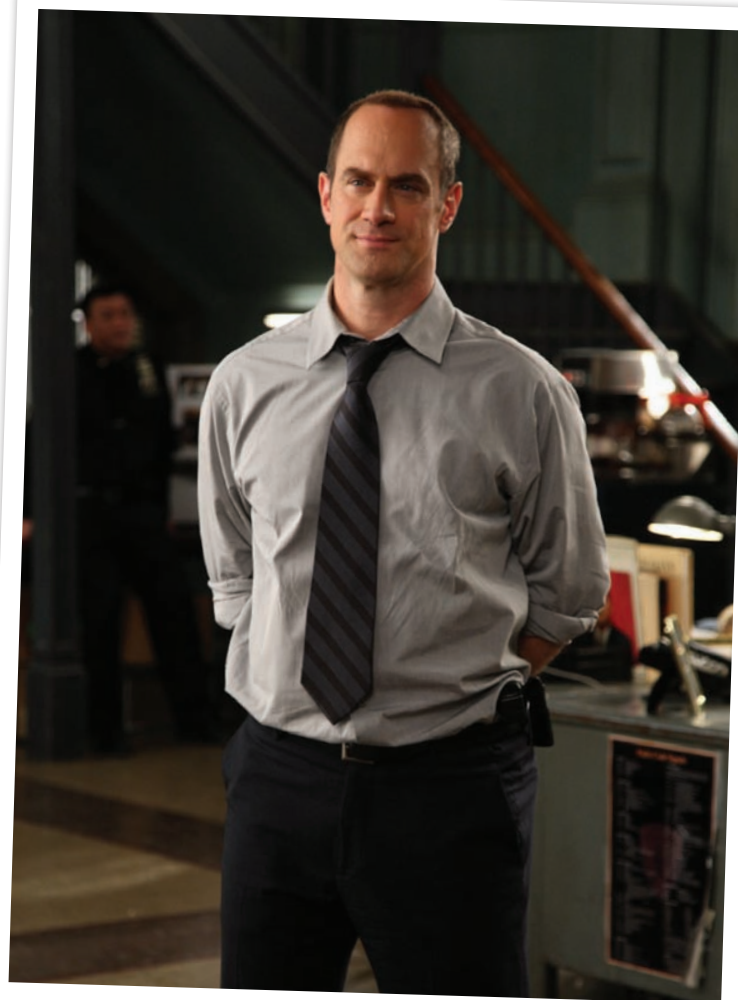
**From Thailand to Egypt, the Emmy-nominated actor who portrays smoldering detective Elliot Stabler on “Law & Order: Special Victims Unit” has long been a globe-trotter. For family vacations, Chris, his wife and their two children typically opt for foreign adventures over theme parks. He opens up to Wild Blue Yonder about his travel philosophy when visiting far-flung locales.**

### **What advice do you have for people traveling to foreign countries?**

To find out whether or not you can drink the water. Having a fairly well-thought-out itinerary is important, too. There’s nothing worse than being in a strange place and floundering about. Especially when you have a full-time job, it’s important to get the biggest impact for the time you have.

### **You’ve been to some exotic places. What are the most unusual accommodations you’ve had while traveling?**

My wife and I were riding motorcycles through Thailand and stayed on these floating rafts that were on the edge of a river. It was a wooden timbered box on a floating platform anchored to the water. It was awesome.



### **Traveling with young children can be challenging, and you have two under 10. How does your family manage long-distance vacations?**

My wife and I were huge travelers before we had kids. Now they’re almost at the age where they can appreciate what they’re being exposed to, so we travel more. For example, we went to Egypt over Christmas. We were in Florence last summer and Rome the summer before that. They get it. They’re starting to appreciate what the world has to offer, and it’s exciting, because we dig it, too.

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**What’s the most important thing for you to keep in mind when traveling somewhere new?**

To have a purpose when I travel. Whether it’s jumping on a motorcycle and riding into the hinterlands or taking kite-surfing lessons or a cooking class, I need to be learning something new, to be deeply occupied in the place where I am.

**Have you ever been surprised by a city you’ve visited?**

Yes, and it was unfortunate. I went to Frankfurt, Germany, and was expecting Old World Europe, not modern skyscrapers. It makes sense, of course, since it was heavily bombed in World War II, but that was one experience that made me exceedingly sad. Now, I don’t go anywhere with too much expectation.



**On top of Chris’ travel to-do list**

- India
- China
- New Guinea
- Eastern Europe
- The Philippines
- Greece
- Japan
- Africa



Chris studied acting and history at the University of Colorado in Boulder before getting his break on sitcoms and later HBO’s “Oz” and “Law & Order: SVU.” He would like to return to visit his alma mater and explore Boulder to see how much it’s changed since he was a student. He also plans to drive up into the Rocky Mountains and visit “all the cool, little old mining towns.”

**Chris’ weekend-getaway style**

When Chris and his family want to escape for a few days, they hop on a flight to the Dominican Republic, where they have a home. What’s the draw? “Direct flights, good weather year-round, the people are nice, and the property is awesome,” he says.